

# DiversityInc MEETING IN A BOX



## BEST PRACTICES FROM THE DIVERSITYINC TOP 50 ON **Leadership Commitment, Diversity Councils, Mentoring, Employee Resource Groups**

►► For D&I staff, HR staff, recruiters, talent-acquisition departments, diversity-council members, employee-resource-group leaders and executive sponsors

**T**his month, we are giving you the latest trends, data and best practices on which diversity-management best practices work to engage, retain and promote talent. We also recommend you review our Web Seminar on [Best Practices From the DiversityInc Top 50](#), featuring No. 1 [Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation](#) and No. 3 [EY](#).

# Best Practices From Diversity Top 50

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## Leadership Commitment/Diversity Councils

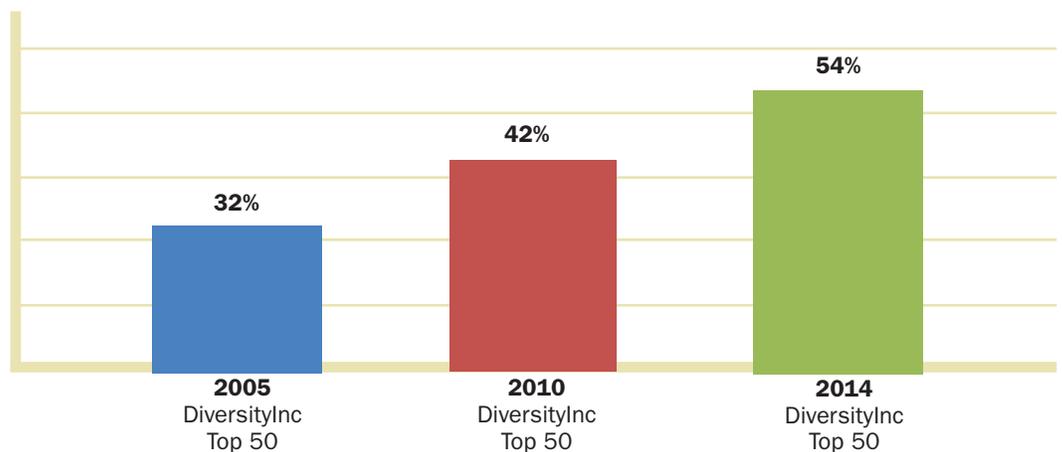
As both Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation and EY demonstrate, strong, visible commitment from the top of the organization is vital to the success of your diversity-management progress.

The visibility of that leadership is most frequently demonstrated in strong external and internal communications, especially a quote on the corporate website, and the frequent use of diversity and inclusion in regular business communications as a driver of corporate goals.

Other best practices employed by senior executives at DiversityInc Top 50 companies include frequent (often small-group) meetings with employee-resource-group leaders, being a cross-cultural mentor, being an executive sponsor of an employee resource group, and holding a leadership or board position on a multicultural nonprofit.

The executive diversity council is crucial to establishing goals for the organization, and many Top 50 companies link these goals to executive bonuses or performance evaluations. Even at the largest companies, there is an [increasing trend](#) in the number of CEOs who personally chair the diversity council. Fifty-four percent of Top 50 CEOs now do this, up from 32 percent in 2005.

### CEOs Who Chair Diversity Council



### Guided Questions for Staff

#### »» Do you have an executive diversity council? If so, does it actually set and monitor corporate goals?

Too many companies set up diversity councils merely as advisory groups without the power to hold people accountable for results. Whether or not your CEO is willing to chair, the council needs to have power, authority and influence in the organization to accomplish your diversity goals.

#### »» If your senior leadership is not involved in diversity and inclusion, how can you get them on board?

What business goals could benefit from a more diverse workforce and leadership? Are their clients, customers, suppliers and investors who would increase business with your company if your diversity efforts and reputation increased?

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## III Talent Development/Mentoring/Sponsorship

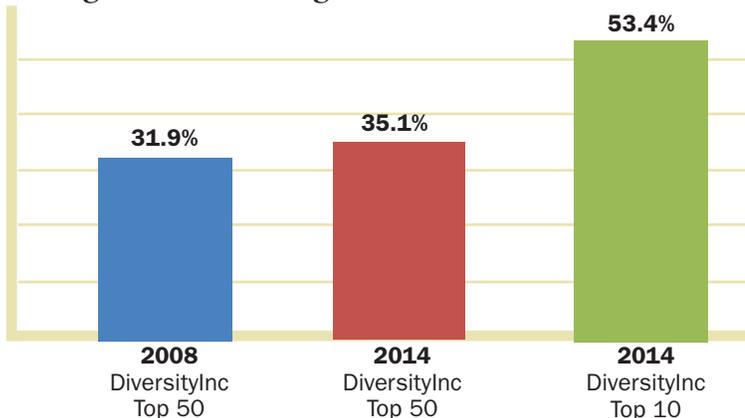
DiversityInc Top 50 data show that even at progressive companies, people from underrepresented groups often have higher rates of voluntary attrition. Why do they leave? Usually because they feel their chances of getting to the top are slim to none, and because they don't perceive the corporate culture as welcoming. For women, the main reason is often [a conflict between job and family responsibilities](#), even at companies known for their flexible workplaces.

DiversityInc Top 50 data show a direct correlation between increased management participation in [formal, cross-cultural mentoring programs](#) and increased diversity in executive levels. Mentoring is the most essential way to make a direct connection with senior executives and to help high-potentials from underrepresented groups realize their full potential. The cross-cultural element enables both the mentors and the mentees to better understand each other.

Having cultural-competence training for both mentors and mentees is increasingly important, as are metrics to assess the success of the relationships.

Increasingly, as EY cites in the Web Seminar, organizations also are emphasizing [sponsorship](#), or political advocacy, particularly for women, Blacks, Latinos and Asians. The prevailing logic has been that unlike mentoring, sponsorship cannot be "arranged" by the company or diversity/HR staff because you can't force someone to lobby for another person. But increasingly, companies are formalizing sponsorship by requiring their senior leaders to take on protégés from these underrepresented groups; giving them toolkits and training to help them succeed in the relationships; and monitoring and measuring the outcome.

### Managers in Mentoring



### ?? Guided Questions for Staff

#### » Is your mentoring program effectively reaching high-potentials from underrepresented groups as well as white men?

If the percentage of managers in your organization who participate in formal, cross-cultural mentoring programs is low (or not rising as high as others in your industry), look at several factors—where you are offering mentoring (is it only at headquarters?), how you are communicating the opportunity, whether your senior leaders are involved, and how you are measuring and communicating success (in terms of engagement, retention and promotions).

#### » Have you considered sponsorship?

If so, is it totally informal? Are you giving sponsors opportunities to be exposed to potential protégés from underrepresented groups? Are you offering cultural-competence training to make them more effective? Educate your executives and protégés on [the difference between mentoring, sponsorship and coaching](#), and help them succeed.

#### » Are you monitoring retention?

In many industries, such as professional services, talented people tend to leave before they get to the top. If this is more true of people from underrepresented groups at your company, you need to find out why. Your resource groups, engagement surveys and exit interviews are the best places to start. Are you fully assessing reasons why people leave and getting to them years before they consider moving on?

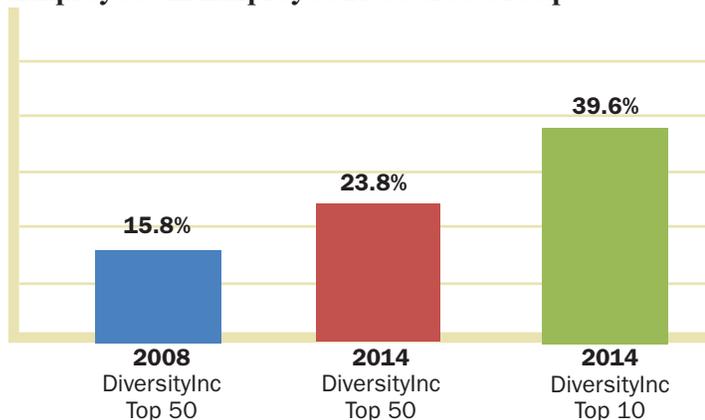
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## Effective Use of Resource Groups for Talent Development

Increasingly, progressive companies such as those in the DiversityInc Top 50 use their resource groups to find, engage and develop talent. Employee-resource-group participation in the Top 50 has increased from 15.8 percent to 23.8 percent over the last six years, and the emphasis on talent development has magnified.

### Employees in Employee Resource Groups



Resource groups offer a critical way to develop leaders, especially from underrepresented groups and those who may not have the obvious qualifications to move into management. Cross-functional and cross-business-unit positions are excellent ways to train future leaders of the organization, and working with executive sponsors gives group leaders exposure to senior leadership and can lead to mentoring and sponsorship relationships.

In addition, resource groups are the best ways to ascertain employee engagement and address retention issues specific to one demographic group

### Guided Questions for Staff

#### » Are your employee resource groups open to everyone?

Are they inclusive of all employees, including hourly/remote workers, who could be your next generation of leaders? Make sure you are clearly communicating the opportunities for leadership in a resource group and helping leaders who are stretching in new roles to maximize their potential.

#### » Are your employee resource groups helping with diversity training?

Effective training is culturally competent and sensitive to the needs of underrepresented groups. Use employee resource groups to understand what works in your company and what needs attention.

#### » Are you communicating your employee-resource-group successes?

If nobody knows what your groups are doing to help develop talent, they won't get more money and more corporate resources to increase their efforts.

## NEXT MONTH

National Hispanic Heritage Month for all employees and CEO Commitment for diversity staff, diversity-council members, employee-resource-group leaders and HR/communications staff.